

THE STORY OF KING HARALD
GREYCLOAK AND OF EARL HAKON
THE SON OF SIGURD.

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OF EARL HAKON THE
SON OF SIGURD.

CHAPTER I. THE UPRISING OF ERIC'S
SONS: AND OF EYVIND SKALD-
SPILLER.

SO Eric's sons took to them the kingdom of Norway after that King Hakon was fallen. Harald was the most accounted of amongst those brethren, and the eldest of them yet alive. Gunnhild, their mother, had much to do with the ruling of the land along with them, and she was called the Kings' Mother. These were lords in the land in those days: to wit, Tryggvi Olafson, in the East-country; Gudrod Biornson in Westfold; and Sigurd the Earl of Ladir in Throndheim. But Gunnhild's sons held but the mid land the first winter. Then went word betwixt Gunnhild's sons and Tryggvi and Gudrod, and all that was said went toward peace, to wit, that they should hold such like share of the realm of Gunnhild's sons as they had aforetime held of King Hakon.

There was one named Glum Geirason, the skald of King Harald, and a man of great daring, and he made this song on the fall of King Hakon :

Good vengeance then gat Harald
 For Gamli. But sword-bearers
 Lost life whenas the fight-strong
 War-leader fame was winning.
 When Battle-god's black falcons
 Drank of the blood of Hakon,
 I heard how the ruddy wound-reed
 Beyond the sea was reddened.

Right dear was this song deemed ; but when Eyvind Finsson heard thereof, he made this song, which is aforewrit :

The flight-shy king aforetime
 Hath reddened Fenrir's jaw-gag
 In Gamli's blood ; there waxed
 The hearts of the trees of steel-storm,
 When seaward the unslumbering
 Drave down the heirs of Eric.
 Great grief on all spear-warders
 For the king's fall lieth heavy.

And this stave also was given forth far and wide. But when King Harald heard thereof, he laid a death-guilt on Eyvind, till at last their friends brought peace about between them, so that Eyvind should become King Harald's skald, even as erst he had been the skald of King Hakon. They were nigh akin, for Gunnhild, the mother of Eyvind, was the daughter of Earl Halfdan. But her mother was Ingibiorg, daughter of King Harald Hairfair.

So Eyvind made this stave on King Harald :

Hord's land-ward, little say they
 Thou lettedst thine heart falter
 When burst wound's hail on byrnies
 And bows were bent against thee,
 That tide the full-edged sheath-ice
 Naked screamed out in battle,
 In hands of thine, O Harald,
 For the hungry wolf's fulfilling.

The sons of Gunnhild abode mostly in the mid land ; for they trusted not to abide under the hands either of the Thrandheim men, or of those of the Wick, who had been the greatest friends of King Hakon, and withal there were many great men in either country.

But now men went about to make peace between Gunnhild's sons and Earl Sigurd, for hitherto had they gotten no dues from Thrandheim ; and so at last they made peace between them, the kings and the earl, and bound the same with oaths. Earl Sigurd was to have such dominion in Thrandheim from them as he had had aforetime from King Hakon. And so they were at peace in words at least.

All Gunnhild's sons were called miserly, and it was said of them that they buried treasure in the earth ; whereof made Eyvind Skald-spiller a stave :

Uller of leek of battle,
 Through all the life of Hakon,
 The seed of Fyri's meadows
 On the falcon-fells we carried.
 But now the folk's foe hideth
 The meal of the woeful maidens
 Of Frodi, in the fair flesh
 Of the troll-wives' foeman's mother.

And this :

The coif-sun of the brow-fields
 Of Fulla shone on the mountains
 Of Uller's keel for skald-folk
 All through the life of Hakon.
 Now the sun of the deep river
 In the mother's corpse is hidden
 Of the giants' foe—so mighty
 Are the spells of the folk strong-hearted.

But when King Harald heard of these staves he sent word to Eyvind to come to him. But when Eyvind came before him, the king laid guilt on him and called him his foe. "And it befitteth thee ill," said he, "to be untrusty to me, whereas thou hast now become my man."

Then sang Eyvind a stave :

Dear king, I had one master
 Or ever thee I gat me ;
 I pray for me no third one,
 For eld, lord, 'gainst me beateth.
 True to the dear king was I,
 With two shields played I never ;
 O king, of thy flock am I,
 Now on my hands eld falleth.

King Harald made Eyvind handsel him self-doom in the case. Now Eyvind had a gold ring great and goodly, which was called Mouldy, and had long ago been taken from out the earth. This ring the king saith he will have, and there was nought else for it.

Then sang Eyvind :

Surely from henceforth should I,
 Speeder of skates of isle-mead,

Find setting fair to me-ward
 Thy breeze of giant-maidens.
 Since now we needs must hand thee,
 Chooser of hawk-land's jewels,
 That very lair of the ling-worm
 Which long time was my father's.

Therewith fared Eyvind home, nor is it told
 that he ever met King Harald again.

CHAPTER II. OF GUNNHILD'S SONS, AND HOW THEY HELD THE CHRIS- TIAN FAITH.

GUNNHILD'S sons had been christened in England, as is aforewrit; but when they came to the ruling of Norway they might nowise bring about the christening of men in the land. But whensoever they might compass it, they brake down temples and undid the feasts of offerings, and gat great hatred thereby. Early in their days came to nought the plenteous seasons; for many kings there were, and each with his court about him; and much they needed, and at great cost, and withal they were most greedy of wealth. Neither held they the laws that King Hakon had set up, save when it pleased them.

They were all the goodliest of men, strong and big, and great of prowess. So sayeth Glum Geirason in that drapa which he made on Harald Gunnhildson:

The terror-staff of the jaw-teeth
 Of Heimdall, he that ofttimes
 Pressed on in fight, was master
 Of twelve-fold kingly prowess.

Oft those brethren went about all together, but whiles each by himself. They were men hard-hearted and bold, great warriors and right happy in battle.

CHAPTER III. THE PLOTTING OF GUNNHILD AND HER SONS.

GUNNHILD, the Kings' Mother, and her sons would oft be meeting for talk and counsel, and turned over the matters of the land thereby. And on a time Gunnhild asked of her sons, "What way are ye minded to let things fare in the matter of the dominion of Thrandheim? Ye bear the name of kings, indeed, as your fathers did before you; but little have ye of land or folk, and yet are ye many to share. East in the Wick Tryggvi and Gudrod bear rule, but they indeed may have some claim thereto, seeing of what kin they be; but Earl Sigurd rules alone over all Thrandheim, nor wot I how this may be meet, to suffer but a very earl to take so great dominion from under you; and marvellous meseemeth, that year by year ye go a-warring in other lands, while ye let an earl of your own country take from you the heritage of your fathers. A little matter had it seemed to King Harald, thy namesake, thy father's father, to take from one earl life and land, when he won all Norway and held it unto eld."

Harald answers: "It is nought so easy," says he, "to end the days of Earl Sigurd's life, as it is to cut the throat of a kid or a calf. Earl Sigurd is of high blood, and hath much kin, and

is well-beloved and wise. We may wot well that if he know surely that he may look for enmity at our hands, all the Thrandheimers will be as one man with him; and then we have no errand thither but an ill one. Withal meseemeth none of us brethren deems it safe to abide under the hand of the Thrandheimers." Then spake Gunnhild: "Fare our redes then by clean another way, and let us betake us to a lesser business. Ye, Harald and Erling, shall abide this autumn in Northmere, and I also may fare with you; and then shall we try all together what may be done."

So in this wise did they.

CHAPTER IV. THE PLOTTING OF GUNNHILD'S SONS WITH GRIOTGARD.

THE brother of Earl Sigurd was called Griotgard. He was far the youngest, and the least accounted of withal; no title of honour had he, but kept a company of men about him, and went a-warring in the summer-tide and so gat him wealth.

Now King Harald sent men into Thrandheim to Earl Sigurd with friendly gifts and friendly words, and the messengers said that King Harald would strike up such friendship with the earl as had been aforetime betwixt him and King Hak on; and therewith bidding the earl come see King Harald that they might bind their friendship fast and fully. Earl Sigurd received well the king's messengers and the king's friendship, but

said that he might not go see him because of his much business; but he sent the king friendly gifts and good words and kindness in return for his friendship. So fared away the messengers, and fared to find Griotgard, and bare him the same errand, the friendship of King Harald to wit, and the bidding to his house, and goodly gifts withal; and by then the messengers departed for home, Griotgard had promised to go. And so on a day appointed came Griotgard to meet King Harald and Gunnhild, and a right blithe welcome he had of them. There was he holden in the greatest well-liking, and was with them in the closest talk and many hidden matters; till it came to this, that the matter of Earl Sigurd came uppermost, even as was afore agreed betwixt the king and the queen. Then they showed forth to Griotgard, how Earl Sigurd had long held him of small account; and if he would be with them in this rede, then says the king that Griotgard should be his earl, and have all the dominion which Earl Sigurd had had heretofore. So it came about that they agreed to this with solemn words, that Griotgard should spy out a likely time for falling on Earl Sigurd, and send word to King Harald thereof. So Griotgard fared home with so much done, and had good gifts of the king.

CHAPTER V. THE BURNING OF EARL SIGURD.

EARL SIGURD fared in autumn-tide in to Stiordale, and abode there a-guesting. Thence he fared out to Oglo, there to guest. Now ever would the earl have many men with him, for he trusted the kings but little; yet now, whereas such friendly words had passed betwixt him and King Harald, he had no great company of men. So now Griotgard did King Harald to wit, that there would be no hopefuller time to fall on Earl Sigurd. So the self-same night the kings, Harald and Erling, went up the Thrandheim-firth with four ships and a great company, and sailed in by night and starlight. Then came Griotgard and met them; and when the night was far spent, they came to Oglo, whereas Earl Sigurd was a-guesting. There they set fire to the house, and burned the stead and the earl therein, and all his folk with him. So then early in the morning they went their ways down the firth and so south to Mere, and dwelt there a long while.

CHAPTER VI. THE UPRISING OF EARL HAKON SIGURDSON.

HAKON, the son of Earl Sigurd, was up in Thrandheim when he heard of these tidings. Then was there forthright great running to arms throughout all Thrandheim, and every keel that was anywise meet for war was thrust into the sea; and when the host came

together they took for earl and captain of their host Hakon, son of Earl Sigurd, and therewith the host put out down the Thrandheim-firth. But when the sons of Gunnhild knew thereof they fared south to Raumsdale and South-mere; and either side kept watch on the other.

Earl Sigurd was slain two winters after the fall of King Hakon.

Eyvind Skald-spiller says thus in the Haloga-tale:

And Sigurd, he
The swans that feedeth
Of the Burden-Tyr
With the rooks' beer
From Hadding's chosen,
The land's wielders
Left life-bereft
Down there at Oglo.

There then the giver
Of the arm's gold-worm,
Who nourished never
Fear of the fish-land,
Laid his life down,
Whenas the land's lords
In trust betrayed
Tyr's very kindred.

Earl Hakon held Thrandheim with the might of his kin to help him for three winters, so that the sons of Gunnhild gat no dues from Thrandheim. Hakon had many battles with Gunnhild's sons, and each slew many men for the other. Hereof telleth Einar Jingle-scale in the Gold-lack, which he made about Earl Hakon:

The troth-fast spear-point dealer,
Wide sea-host out he drew there,

The merry king laid sleeping
 All sloth in storms of Gondul.
 The trier of the red moon
 That is of Odin's elbow,
 Eager uphove the fight-sail
 For the kings' fight-mood's allaying.

And again he saith :

The gladdener of the swan-fowl
 Of the heavy sword-stream nowise
 Had any wite laid on him
 For the shaft-storm of the spear-wife.
 Stoutly the lord of fight-crash
 Shook from Hlokk's sail the bow-hail,
 And he of the sword unsparing
 Goodly the wolves' life nourished.

Full many a storm of Ali
 Most mighty was befalling
 Ere the deft grove of the shield-leek
 Took the Eastland at the gods' will.

And moreover Einar telleth how Earl Hakon
 avenged his father :

Loud praise I bear forth herewith
 For that vengeance for his father
 Which the warder of waves' raven
 Wreaked with the sword of battle.

Mail-rain of the sword-storm's urger
 Rained wide on the life of hersirs,
 And he, for battle minded,
 Gave many a thane to Odin.
 The Vidur of gale of sea-steads
 Let wax the life-cold sword-storm
 'Gainst the shelter of the warriors
 That raise the High-one's tempest.

After these things the friends of either side went
 between them with words of peace ; for the bonders

were weary of war and unrest in the very land. And so it was brought by the redes of wise men, that peace was made between them, and Hakon was to have such dominion in Thrandheim as Earl Sigurd his father had had, but the kings the dominion therein that King Hakon had had before them; and this was bound with full oath and troth. And now befell great love betwixt Earl Hakon and Gunnhild, though now and again they baited each other with guile. And so time wore for other three winters, and Hakon abode in peace in his dominion.

CHAPTER VII. OF GREYCLOAK.

KING HARALD abode oftenest in Hordland and Rogaland, and yet more of the brethren also; and oft was their dwelling at Hardang. Now on a certain summer came a ship of burden from Iceland and owned of Icelanders, and laden with grey cloaks. They brought the ship up to Hardang, because they had heard that there already was the greatest concourse of men; but when men came to deal with them they would not buy their grey cloaks. So went the skipper to King Harald, for he had known him to speak to aforetime, and told him of his trouble. The king said he would come to them, and did so. King Harald was a kindly-mannered man and a merry-hearted. He was come there in a cutter all manned; he looked on their lading, and spake to the skipper: "Wilt thou give me one of thy grey cloaks?" "With a good will would I," said the skipper,

“yea, and even more.” Then the king took a grey cloak, and cloaked him therewith, and so went down into the barge ; and before they rowed away every one of his men had bought a cloak. Moreover, a few days thereafter came thither so many men every one of them wanting to buy a grey cloak, that not the half of them that wanted them could get them.

So ever after was the king called Harald Greycloak.

CHAPTER VIII. THE BIRTH OF EARL ERIC.

EARL HAKON fared on a winter to the Uplands to a feast, and there, as it happened, he lay with a certain woman, and she lowly of kin ; and as time wore the woman went with child, and when it was born it was a man-child ; so it was sprinkled with water and called Eric. The mother brought the lad to Earl Hakon, and said that he was the father thereof ; so the earl let the lad be nourished at the house of one called Thorleif the Sage. He dwelt up in Middledale, and was a wise man and a wealthy, and a great friend of the earl’s. Eric speedily waxed hopeful ; he was of the fairest aspect, and great and strong from his earliest days. The earl had but little to say to him. Earl Hakon was the goodliest to look on of all men, not high of stature, yet strong enow, and well skilled in all prowess, wise of wit, and the greatest of warriors.

CHAPTER IX. THE SLAYING OF KING TRYGGVI.

ON a certain autumn Earl Hakon fared to the Uplands, and when he came on to Heathmark there came to meet him King Tryggvi Olafson and King Gudrod Biornson, and thither also came Gudbrand a-Dale. These held counsel together, and sat long in privy talk, whereof this came uppermost, that each should be friend of the other; and therewith they parted and went home each to his own realm. Now Gunnhild and her sons hear hereof, and misdoubt them of it, that they have been plotting against the kings; so often they talk hereof together. But in spring-tide King Harald and King Gudrod his brother give out that they will be a-faring a war-voyage in the summer West-over-the-sea, or into the East-countries, as their wont was. So they gather their folk together and thrust their ships into the water and array them for departure; but when they drank their ale of departure, great drinking there was, and a many things spoken over the drink; and so they gat to the sport of likening man to man, and the talk fell on the kings themselves. Then spake a man, saying that King Harald was the foremost of those brethren in all matters. Then waxed King Gudrod very wroth, and says so much as that he will be none the worse in any wise than King Harald, and that he is ready to prove the same. Then speedily were they full wroth either of them, so that either bade other come and fight, and ran to their weapons withal. But they who had their

wits about them, and were the less drunken, stayed them and ran betwixt. So they went both to their ships, but it was no longer to be looked for that they should sail together. Gudrod sailed east along the land, and Harald made out into the main, saying that he would sail West-over-the-sea; but when he was gotten without the isles, he turned and sailed east along the land, keeping out to sea. King Gudrod sailed by the common course east-away to the Wick, and so east across the Fold. Thence he sent word to King Tryggvi to come and meet him, and they would go both together that summer a-warring in the Eastlands. King Tryggvi took the message well and hopefully. He had heard that King Gudrod had but few folk; so he went to meet him with but one cutter, and they met at the Walls, east of Sotanness. But when they came to the council, King Gudrod's men leapt forth and slew King Tryggvi and twelve men with him; and he lieth at the place which is now called Tryggvi's Cairn.

CHAPTER X. THE FALL OF KING GUDROD.

NOW King Harald sailed far out to sea, and he made in for the Wick, and came a-night-time to Tunsberg. There heard he that King Gudrod was a-guesting a little way up the country. So King Harald and his folk went thither, and came there a-night-time, and took the house over their heads. King Gudrod came forth, he and his; but short was the

stour or ever King Gudrod fell, and many men with him. Then King Harald fared away to find King Gudrod his brother, and they twain laid all the Wick under them.

CHAPTER XI. OF HARALD THE GRENLANDER.

KING GUDROD BIORNSON had wedded well and meetly, and had a son by his wife called Harald; he was sent into Grenland to Roi the White, a lord of the land, to be fostered there. The son of Roi was Rani the Wide-faring, and Harald and he were foster-brethren and much of an age. After the fall of Gudrod his father, Harald, who was called the Grenlander, fled away to the Uplands with Rani his foster-brother and but few other men, and Harald tarried awhile with his kin. Now Eric's sons pried closely into all such as had enmity against them, and on those the most whom they deemed like to rise up against them. Harald's kindred gave him the rede that he should depart from the land; so Harald the Grenlander fared east to Sweden, and sought for himself a crew, so that he might fall into company with such men as went a-warring to gather wealth; and Harald was the doughtiest of men. There was one Tosti in Sweden, the mightiest and noblest of all men of that land who lacked title of dignity; he was the greatest of warriors, and was for the most part a-warring, and he was called Skogul-Tosti. Into his fellowship Harald the Grenlander betook himself, and was with Skogul-

Tosti a-warring in the summer, and every man deemed well of Harald, and Harald abode behind with Tosti through the winter. Sigrid was the name of Tosti's daughter; young and fair she was, and exceeding high-minded. She was afterward wedded to Eric the Victorious, the Swede-king, and their son was Olaf the Swede, who was king in Sweden in after-times. King Eric died of sickness at Upsala ten winters after Styrbjorn fell.

CHAPTER XII. THE WARRING OF EARL HAKON.

THE sons of Gunnhild drew a great host out of the Wick, and so fare north along the land, gathering ships and folk from every country; and they lay it bare that they are bringing that same host north to Thrandheim against Earl Hakon.

Thereof heareth the earl, and gathereth folk and goeth a-shipboard; but when he heard of the host of Gunnhild's sons how many they were, he led his folk south to Mere, and harried whereso he came, and slew much folk. Then he sent back the host of Thrandheim and the whole crowd of the bonders, but himself fared a-warring all about either Mere and Raumsdale, and had spies abroad south of the Stad on the host of Gunnhild's sons. But when he heard that they were come into the Firths, and abode a wind there to sail north about the Stad, then sailed Earl Hakon south of the Stad, but out to sea, so that none might behold his sails from the land. Then he held his course

by the open sea east along the land till he came right on to Denmark; thence he sailed for the Eastlands, and harried there the summer long.

The sons of Gunnhild led their host north into Thrandheim, and abode there a long while through the summer, and took all scat and dues there; but when summer was far spent, Sigurd Slaver and Gudrod abode behind there, and King Harald and the other brethren went into the East-country with the host that had gone with them in the summer season.

CHAPTER XIII. OF EARL HAKON AND THE SONS OF GUNNHILD.

EARL HAKON fared in autumn-tide to Helsingland, and laid up his ships there, and then fared by land through Helsingland and Jamtland, and so west over the Keel down into Thrandheim. Much folk drew unto him, and he gat a-shipboard. But when Gunnhild's sons hear thereof they get aboard their ships and make down the firth; but Earl Hakon goeth to Ladir, and abode there the winter, while Gunnhild's sons dwelt in Mere; and either made raids on the other, and slew men each of the other. Earl Hakon held dominion in Thrandheim, and was there ofttest in winter-tide, but whiles in the summer he fared east into Helsingland, and took his ships there, and went into the Eastlands, and harried there in summer-tide. But whiles he abode in Thrandheim, and had his host out, and then Gunnhild's sons might not hold them north of the Stad.

CHAPTER XIV. THE SLAYING OF SIGURD SLAVER.

HARALD GREYCLOAK fared on a summer north to Biarmland, and harried there, and had a great battle with the folk of the land at Dwina side. There had King Harald the victory, and slew much folk; then he harried wide about in the land, and gat to him exceeding great wealth. Hereof telleth Glum Geirason :

The word-strong king's oppressor
 Reddened the fire-brand east there,
 All northward of the township,
 Where saw I Biarm-folk running.
 Spear-gale the youthful Atheling
 Gat him on that same journey.
 Good word the men's appeaser
 Found on the side of Dwina.

King Sigurd Slaver came to the house of Klypp the Hersir; he was the son of Thord, the son of Horda-Kari, and was a mighty man and of great kin. Now Klypp was not at home as then, but Alof his wife gave the king good welcome, and there was noble feast and great drinking. Alof was the daughter of Asbiorn, and the sister of Jarnskeggi from Yriar in the North-country. Hreidar, the brother of Asbiorn, was the father of Styrkar, the father of Eindrid, the father of Einar Thambarskelfir.

Now the king went a-night-time to the bed of Alof, and lay with her against her will; and thereafter fared the king away. Thereafter in the

autumn-tide King Harald and Sigurd his brother fared up to Vors, and there summoned the bonders to a Thing; at which Thing the bonders fell on them to slay them, but they escaped and went their ways. King Harald went to Hardanger, but King Sigurd to Alrek-stead. But when Hersir Klypp heard thereof, he called together his kinsmen to set on the king; and the captain of the company was Vemund Knuckle-breaker. And so when they came to the house they fell on the king. And so tells the tale that Klypp thrust the king through with a sword, and slew him; but forthright Erling the Old slew Klypp on the spot.

CHAPTER XV. THE FALL OF GRIOT-GARD.

KING HARALD GREYCLOAK and Gudrod his brother drew together a great host from out the East-country, and made for Thrandheim with that folk. But when Earl Hakon heard thereof he gathered folk to him, and made for Mere and harried there. There was Griotgard his father's brother, and was charged with the warding of the land for Gunnhild's sons; he drew out folk even as the kings had sent him word. Earl Hakon went to meet him, and joined battle with him; there fell Griotgard and two earls with him, and much other folk. Hereof telleth Einar Jingle-scale :

The hardy king caused helm-storm
To fall upon his foemen.

Thereof were friends a-waxing
 In Loft's friend's hall of friendship.
 Three earls' sons fierce were fallen
 In fiery rain of Odin,
 Whereof the pride of the people
 Great praise and fame hath gotten.

Thereafter Earl Hakon sailed out to sea, and so by the outer course south along the land. So came he south right on to Denmark to King Harald Gormson the Dane-king; there had he good welcome, and abode with him the winter through.

There also with the Dane-king was a man called Harald, who was son of Knut, the son of Gorm, and was the brother's son of King Harald. He was new-come from warring, wherein he had long been, and had gotten thereby very great wealth; so he was called Gold Harald. He was deemed to have good right to be king in Denmark.

CHAPTER XVI. THE FALL OF KING ERLING.

KING HARALD GREYCLOAK and those brethren brought their folk north to Thrandheim, and found nought to withstand them there; so they took scat and dues, and all king's revenues, and made the bonders pay great fines, for the kings had now for a long while gotten but little money from Thrandheim, since Earl Hakon had abided there with many men, and had been at war with the kings.

In the autumn King Harald went into the South-country with the more part of the folk that were

home-born there ; but King Erling abode behind with his folk, and he had yet again plenteous goods of the bonders, and dealt them out hard measure. Thereof the bonders bemoaned them sore, and took their scathe ill. And so in the winter they gathered together and gat a great company, and went against King Erling as he was out a-guesting, and had battle with him. There fell King Erling, and a many men with him.

CHAPTER XVII. FAMINE IN NORWAY.

IN the days when Gunnhild's sons ruled over Norway befell great scarcity, and ever the greater it grew the longer they ruled over the land ; and the bonders laid it to the account of the kings, whereas they were greedy of money, and dealt hardly with the bonders. To such a pitch it came at last, that all up and down the land folk well-nigh lacked all corn and fish. In Halogaland was there such hunger and need, that well-nigh no corn grew there, and the snow lay all over the land at midsummer, and all the live-stock was bound in stall at the very midsummer. Thus sang Eyvind Skald-spiller when he came forth from his house, and it was snowing hard :

On Swolnir's dame it snoweth,
 And so have we as Finn-folk
 To bind the hind of birch-buds
 In byre amidst of summer.

CHAPTER XVIII. OF THE ICELANDERS AND EYVIND SKALD-SPILLER.

EYVIND made a drapa on all the men of Iceland, and they gave him this reward, that each bonder gave him a scat-penny of the weight of three silver pennies, and which would cut white. But when this silver came forth at the Althing, men took counsel to get smiths to refine the silver; and thereafter was a cloak-clasp made thereof, and, the smithying being paid for, the clasp was worth fifty marks, and this they sent to Eyvind. But now Eyvind let shear the clasp asunder, and bought him stuff therewith. That same spring withal came a shoal of herring to certain outward-lying fishing-steads; so Eyvind manned a row-boat of his with his house-carles and tenants, and rowed thither whereas the herring were being netted; and he sang:

Now did we set our sea-horse
 Be spurring from the northward
 After the terns fin-tailèd,
 Foreboders of the long nets,
 To wot, O dear fire-goddess,
 If silver-weeds of the ice-fields,
 Through which the wave-swine rooteth,
 My friends be fain to sell me?

So utterly were his goods expended, that he must needs buy herring with the arrows of his bow; as he singeth:

We fetched the fair cloak-buckle
 The sea-heaven's folk had sent us

From over the sea, and sold it
 For store of the swimming firth-herd.
 The more part of the herrings
 That leap from hands of Egil,
 To Mar for sea-shafts sold I,
 And all this came of hunger.